

## Two members end terms on Montgomery County Council

Knapp takes job in Gaithersburg, Trachtenberg hints at political future

by Erin Cunningham | Staff Writer

Outgoing County Councilwoman Duchy Trachtenberg hinted at a political future during her last council meeting Tuesday.

Trachtenberg, who was defeated in the Sept. 14 Democratic primary, said, "I am by no means at the end of any political road."

Trachtenberg (D-At large) of North Bethesda served one term on the council. A new council term begins Monday.

Although she admitted leaving the council with some sadness, Trachtenberg told The Gazette she has had numerous job offers at the county, state and federal level since her election loss.

She also has had conversations about political roles she might play in the future, Trachtenberg said. She expects to make a decision in January.

"I don't really want to elaborate," she said when asked for specifics.

Councilman Michael J. Knapp (D-Dist. 2) of Germantown also is leaving the council this week. Knapp did not seek re-election and began working as the city of Gaithersburg's economic development consultant Nov. 1.

Knapp served two terms on the council.

The council's two new incoming members — Democrat Hans Riemer of Silver Spring, who replaces Trachtenberg, and state Del. Craig L. Rice (D-Dist. 15) of Germantown, who takes over for Knapp — will be sworn into office Monday.

During the outgoing council members' last official meeting Tuesday, Councilman George L. Leventhal (D-At large) of Takoma Park said that each leaves a legacy.

Knapp, who served as the council's president in 2007, sponsored legislation to reorganize the county's fire service. He led the effort to bring the county's volunteer and career firefighters under a single fire chief in 2003.

That same reorganization granted the county's volunteer firefighters collective bargaining rights.

Knapp also has been the leading force behind much of the county's planning work, and he most recently chaired the council's Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee.

Leventhal said that Knapp, whose background is in biotechnology, championed the county's focus on the biotechnology jobs of the future.

Knapp also was a driving force behind the recent adoption of the Great Seneca Science Corridor master plan, and this year the council approved a bill Knapp sponsored that calls for \$2 million in tax credits for biotechnology companies.

He served as council president in 2008, and vice president in 2007.

During her term on the council, Trachtenberg said she has been proudest of her work on social and fiscal issues.

Trachtenberg served as chair of the council's Management and Fiscal Policy Committee and as member of its Health and Human Services Committee.

Trachtenberg's background is in social work, with a focus on adolescent addiction.

Councilman Philip M. Andrews (D-Dist. 3) of Gaithersburg said that perhaps Trachtenberg's greatest legacy will be her work to establish the county's Family Justice Center.

Since the center opened 18 months ago, it has served more than 2,000 families affected by domestic violence, Trachtenberg said Tuesday.

In 2008, Trachtenberg and Andrews proposed reducing the county government's personnel spending by \$40 million — ultimately lowering pay raises to employees. Trachtenberg said Tuesday that she does not regret that position, which was unpopular with the government employee unions that she has said played a role in her election loss.

On Tuesday, Trachtenberg said that position suddenly has become "politically correct."

"I learned a long time ago from mentors and friends that political success is not measured by election results, but rather by meaningful reform and your willingness to use your political power to achieve that end, despite electoral consequences or heartbreak," she said.